

## # 527 YORK ROAD

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This structure is also significant as a document of the growth of a commercial building over a span of time. Examination of the building's additions and alterations would shed light on changing business needs from 1878 to the present days. This study would show the evolution of the building from a business on the first floor with a residence on the second floor, to both floors being totally commercial.

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

A. Loose Building  
AND/OR COMMON  
527 York Road**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

527 York Road

CITY, TOWN

Towson

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Ninth District

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☒ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

George R. Hom

Telephone #:

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New Courts Building, Recording Division-Land Records

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Liber #: 5841Folio #: 675

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NONE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**☐ EXCELLENT☒ GOOD☐ FAIR☐ DETERIORATED☐ RUINS☐ UNEXPOSED**CHECK ONE**☐ UNALTERED☒ ALTERED**CHECK ONE**☒ ORIGINAL SITE☐ MOVEDDATE Winter, 77/78**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The building at 527 York Road is a 2-story brick building, of common bond, flush with two other buildings on the north and south. The roof is flat.

The original east facade was L-shaped. This is no longer obvious on the first floor where a modern store front has been added. The second story retains its original character and is 5 bays wide.

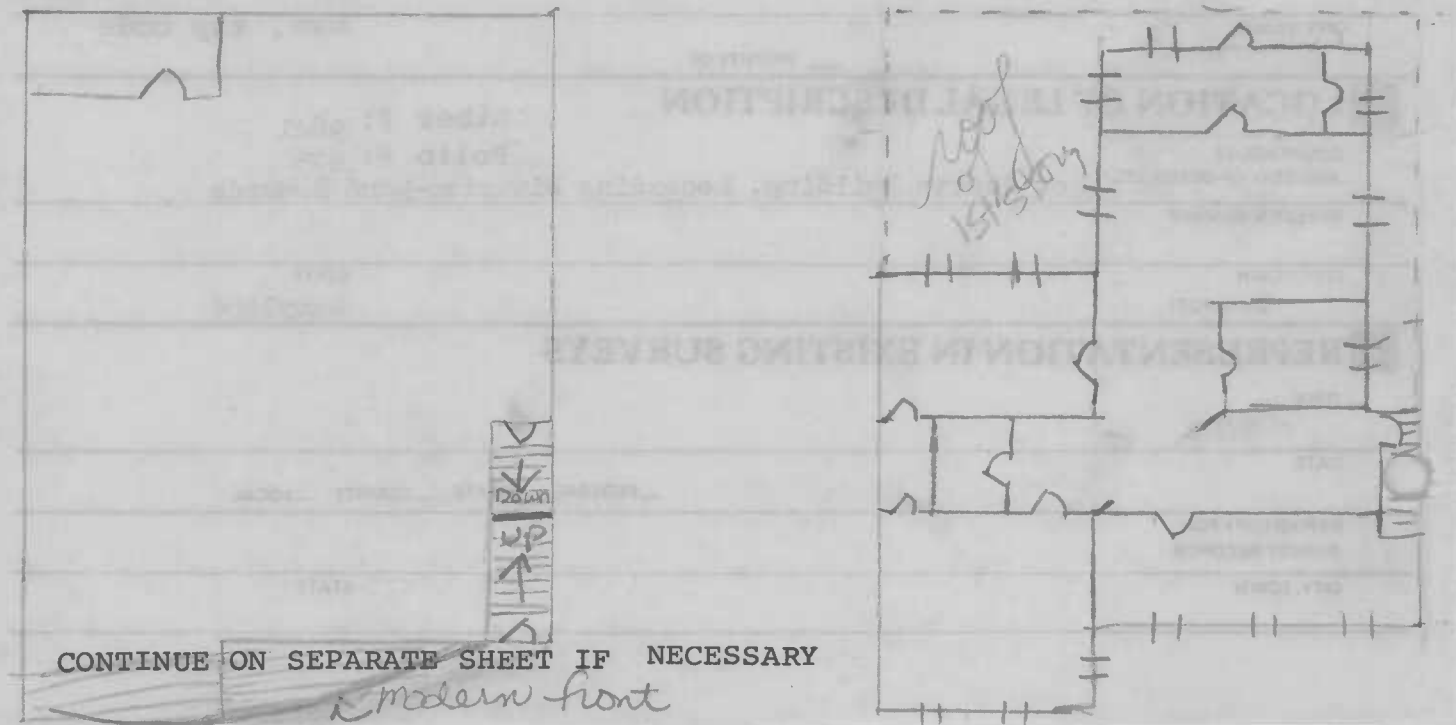
There is a pair of double doors in the modern storefront, and a single door on the northern end which gives access to the second floor. Fenestration of the second story is regular. Running south to north there is: two 4/4 sashes (facing east), one 4/4 sash (facing north - possible because of the L-shape), three 4/4 sashes (facing east). Windows have plain trim and flat arches.

Decoration is restricted to the area between the roof and the second story windows. There are two wooden belt courses and the cornice is capped by a third course of wood. Both the north and south ends of the facade have a decorative corbel at the roof line. Both corbels are concave with dentils, and are topped by an egg shape with a central carved rosette.

The west facade is 5 bays wide on the first story and 4 bays wide on the second story. The first story is rectangular in basic layout and the western section is probably an addition. The second story is an irregular Z-shaped plan. A frame projection of the second story (resting on the flat roof of the first story) may also be an addition.

A steep stairway leads to the roof of the first story and gives access to the second story from the ground. At the top of these stairs is a simple square arch, made with boards, which may once have served as a support for clotheslines.

Fenestration on the second story is now irregular. Running south to north, on the west facade there is: two 4/4 sashes, 6-pane casement (on projection), a door (on projection).

Interior

There is a full basement of uncoursed stone foundations. Joists are circular sawn. Square head cutlnails were used in the braces. Brick pillars support the floor above. There is a large brick/stone support which may have once been the chimney support. Evidence of the building's evolution can be seen in indications of windows in the northern foundation, a flight of steps now leading nowhere, and a collapsed set of stairs which appear to have been an exterior entrance (before the first story addition was built).

Little original fabric is left on the first floor. The pressed metal ceiling is really the only old material remaining. In the large showroom the design is simple inset panels with a fleur de lis cornice. The ceiling in the small bathroom has a more intricate pattern of circles and squares with an egg and dart cornice.

On the second story, more of the original design and material is intact. There are two round arches in the central hallway, which, if not original, are at least early alterations. Wide, architrave mouldings surround the windows and doors. Some of the doors still have 2-pane transoms and early box locks with porcelin knobs.

One of the more intriguing elements of the building is the large, closet-like room on the second floor. The size of a walk-in closet, the room is lit by a skylight. On one wall are placed two large, carved, wooden brackets about 5 feet apart. Spanning these brackets, and fitting into holes carved in the brackets, is a pole. The question is: Why was the room designed this way? Is it merely a closet? a dressing room?

### History

According to Towson: A Picture History of a Maryland Town, the entire 500 block of York Road was leveled in a fire in 1878. Thus, number 527 cannot predate this event. At this time the property was owned by August Loose. A passage in the same book tells how Loose rebuilt his tailoring business after the fire. The following picture shows the building as it appeared sometime in the nineteen-teen's:

Undaunted by the fire, August Loose rebuilt his tailoring shop on York Road. The business had begun in a frame building on the flatiron at the intersection of Joppa and York.

These brick buildings directly across York Road from the present Towson Theater were probably photographed in the late teens. York Road was still unpaved, but sidewalks and cut-stone curbing had been added.

*Photograph courtesy of  
M. Eliza Bosley and Marie Bosley Kade*



**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

527 York Road is significant as a typical example of the Victorian commercial structure. Altered on the first story, the second story still reveals representative elements - brick facade, belt courses, cornices, corbels. The remaining original fabric of the interior - metal ceilings, mouldings, doors, etc. - is also important.

This structure is also significant as a document of the growth of a commercial building over a span of time. Examination of the building's additions and alterations would shed light on changing business needs from 1878 to the present days. This study would show the evolution of the building from a business on the first floor with a residence on the second floor, to both floors being totally commercial.

Number 527 documents changing commercial needs, but is also representative of the physical makeup of early Towson. A modern storefront dominates the street level, but if one looks to the second story the Victorian character of the street is very clear. In sharp contrast to the modern department store across the street, this small remnant of Victoriana is indicative of what was -- and of what remains viable today. The building is still being commercially used with much original material intact. With sensitivity and a view to constructive use, this building can continue to be a document of the past and serve a use in the future.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Hein, H. George and Behm, Carl. Towson: A Pictorial History of a Maryland Town, 1977.  
Various land records (see title search attached)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

WAYNE L. NIELD, II  
HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

Druscilla J. Null

ORGANIZATION

Historic Towson/Goucher College

DATE

1/20/78

STREET & NUMBER

Dulaney Valley Rd.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

## INTRODUCTION

The three recordable buildings in the 500 block of York Road on the east side of the street are problematical not only because of alterations but because of additions and the degree to which buildings share foundations, walls, etc. These buildings were erected in the late 19th century and early 20th century on an historic site.

The history of the entire block is an interesting one. On the 1853 Zur Horst map one can see that the "Hotel" occupies a trapezoidal lot bounded on the West by York Road, on the North by Joppa Road and on the East by Hillen Road. A five acre lot being offered by Benjamin Payne as a possible site for the new Court House lies to the South. On the 1877 Atlas it can be seen that much development took place during the next twenty-four years or so after 1853 including the laying out of streets and lots in a gridiron plan with a North-South axis. The hotel, however, remains on its large irregular lot which forms nearly an entire block and it appears to be using all of that space except for a tiny parcel on Pennsylvania Avenue containing the newspaper office of W. H. Ruby. In addition to the hotel itself there are several large outbuildings. Deeds and old plats indicate that these buildings included at least the stables necessary for boarding travelers & horses, and a stone springhouse.

In its time Towson has had several hotels and taverns which were logical and necessary establishments in a town that was both a crossroads service center and county seat. The hotel which stood on this site until 1929, however, is believed to have been the oldest having been built by the Towsons in the 1760's. That roads, including the important York Turnpike, were laid out relative to the building's location and that it was an important gathering place for over a century and a half are facts which gave it tremendous significance as a landmark.

By 1898, however, the hotel no longer dominated the large and centrally located lot. The Bromley Atlas of that year shows that in addition to the little newspaper office two other larger buildings which had their own outbuildings were constructed facing York Road. The southernmost is labeled as belonging to J. German and the northernmost is Towson National Bank. Parts of these buildings are believed to remain today being contained in Robinson's Liquor store (Bank) and the Kent Lounge. By the time of the 1920's America had become "motorized" and Towson had become suburbanized. Hotels, at least outside of the city, gave way to motels or "motor courts" as they were first called. The landmark which had dominated this block and which had indeed helped to foster the town itself was razed in 1929 and replaced by a movie theatre and shops.

Little or nothing remains of the era in which this block was one of Towson's open spaces occupied only by the necessities of the hotel except, that is, for the irregular shape of the block itself. The only open spaces are the asphalted parking lots behind the more than twenty commercial structures of the block. There are two buildings which were late 19th century neighbors to the hotel and along with the movie theatre are the only structures of the block currently being recorded (1977-78).

## TITLE SEARCH

## OWNERS

LIBER/FOLIO

Present Owner. George R. Hom

(LR 5841/675)

Bought property from Irene Schnauffer by deed dated December 27, 1977.

II. Irene Louise Schnauffer

(LR 1863/151)

Bought property from J. Rollin Otto as executor of the estate of W. Stanley Schnauffer by deed dated August 11, 1950.

III. William Stanley Schnauffer

(LR 958/226)

Bought property from Ida L. M. Held by deed dated May 3, 1935.

IV. Ida L. M. Held

(LR 522/368)

Bought property from George C. Tracey by deed dated February 20, 1920.

V. George C. Tracey

(LR 509/265)

Bought property from William F. Loose by deed dated May 6, 1919.

VI. William F. Loose

(LR 409/309)

Bought from Aquilla C. T. Bosley by deed dated April 24, 1913.

VII. Aquilla C. T. Bosley

(LR 409/307)

Bought property from Kate Meyer and Mary C. Loose as executrices of the estate of Eliza Loose by deed dated April 24, 1913.

VIII. Eliza Loose

(LR 32/33)

Bought property from Enos Smedley by deed dated March 7, 1861.

IX. August Loose

(LR 20/384)

Leased property from Enos Smedley by agreement dated October 8, 1857.

X. Enos Smedley

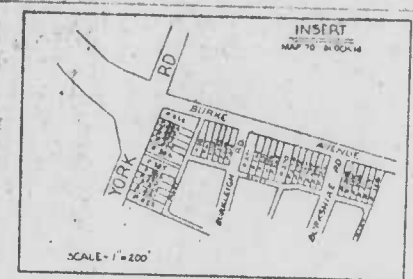
(LR 9/123)

Bought property from Gradton M. Bosley by deed dated July 24, 1854.

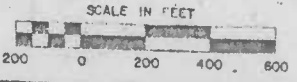


York Rd.  
# 527

BA-1453



TOWSON  
SCALE 1" = 200'



DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION  
TAX MAP DIVISION  
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

MAP NO.  
70A



BA. 1453

# 527 YORK RD  
E. FACADE

W. NIELD  
WINTER 77-78